The Tribune Institute

At Your Service

WHEN "THE HEIGHT OF CHERRIES" COMES

It Is Time to Think About Canning Next Winter's Fruit

By ANNE LEWIS PIERCE.
Director of The Tribune Institute.

"YA'S, 'UM, it's de height ob cherries, mum! If youse gwine to put up cherries, you better do it right quick, 'cuz dey's a-goin'." That is what the colored folks around the Southern markets say to the "white folks" in cherry time.

To can or not to can—that is the question!

If you must use a gas stove over a long period of cooking, buy your material in small lots at city prices, use heat and service that would otherwise not be employed—then, probably, you do not gain anything economically by doing your own canning and preserving.

On the other hand, if you have a small country place, or even a "handkerchief" garden, or if you can get from small producers, in the height of the season, fruits and vegetables in reasonably large amounts at reduced rates, and use fire and service that would be available, anyway—then you certainly miss something if you deprive yourself and your family of the pride and pleasure and wholesomeness of the well stocked closet, with its tidy rows of canned goods, jellies and preserves. No housekeeper can do without them, whether they be bought or home-made, when winter time comes.

Commercial vs. Home-made Goods.

The cannery has the advantage of the housekeeper in having special machinery for applying the exact degree of temperature desirable for different products, and for sealing the cans most efficiently.

On the other hand, the housekeeper has an advantage in the flavoring and handling of smaller quantities, producing a more delicious and distinctive product than any but the most expensive commercial goods. This applies more especially to preserves than to canned goods.

Complete sterilization by heat and hermetical sealing in a tin container are the characteristics of canned goods, commercially speaking. The micro-organisms that cause spoilage are killed by the one process, and any subsequent invasion of the can is prevented by the other. But some types of "bugs" are much more resistant than others, and hence some products, like corn and beans, are very difficult to can, while the acid fruits, on the other hand, are much more easily kept.

A happy-go-lucky method and a uniform treatment for all products will not give the best results, though the product may "keep," for the lower the heat and the shorter the time of cooking compatible with perfect sterilization the nearer the canned goods come to the fresh product.

Blanching and Processing.

For instance, apples are processed for eight or ten minutes at 212 degrees Fahrenheit, while corn, one of the most difficult products, is cooked for seventy-five minutes at 250 degrees Fahrenheit. For the acid tomatoes, on the other hand, fifty minutes at boiling temperature will serve, and twelve to fifteen minutes sterilizes most fruits. These refinements have been worked out by careful and extensive experimental work in the canners' research laboratory in Washington, and a study of commercial methods, as given in the publications of the experts of this laboratory and the Bureau of Chemistry, is well worth while, though all of the details are not necessary in home work. A knowledge of these principles gives a scientific background of interest and enables the housewife to meet intelligently any difficulties that may arise.

The preliminary treatment of "blanching" (which is merely parboiling in boiling water for from one to five minutes) is very important in putting up vegetables. This short boiling in the open softens the vegetables and removes some of the mucous substances on the surface, producing conditions that cannot be attained by boiling in the closed can. The canner would not can without this preliminary, and the housewife would do well to follow suit.

Boiling temperature is the highest available in the open water bath method, such as would be practised in the home. This is usually sufficient, and the time of cooking can be lengthened if the temperature cannot be raised. There are small canning outfits, however, available for outdoor country work, and a small pressure cooker, which will process a few cans at a time, giving any desired temperature, can be bought.

Down with Preserving Powders!

Every year—as surely as canning time comes round—the voice of the "preserving powder" man is heard in the land. He assures you that a wee bit of his white, harmless powder will save you much trouble and your corn and preserves will not spoil.

These products all have a fatal similarity. "Mrs. Price's Canning Compound" is the most famous one, commercially and legally, or rather illegally. It is principally borax with some benzoic acid and salt, the two first named being chemical preservatives which are injurious to health.

The use of such a product commercially would make the manufacturer subject to prosecution. It simply "is not done" in canning circles, good or bad. The spectacle of our women adulterating their fresh, sanitary product put up at home to produce "superior quality and healthfulness" is therefore especially painful. Canning powders are both unnecessary and injurious. There is no excuse for them.

One method of sterilizing vegetables which is more trouble, but gives very superior results, is to place the cans in boiling water for an hour at a time on three successive days, and allow them to cool in between. This shorter period of heating gives better quality, while successive heating and cooling insures the destruction of the spores or seeds as they develop, these being more resistant and not destroyed by the heat that kills the bacteria themselves.

The Question of Containers.

The housekeeper has the advantage of being able to put up her goods in glass, avoiding the difficulties of the attack on the tin by the contents—while for the commercial canner glass is almost prohibitory because of first cost, extra expense in shipment, breakage, etc.

Also, the housewife can use her containers over and over and so afford the initial higher cost. The solution of the tin in the contents is in most cases very small indeed—negligible under the legal rulings except after long standing and in some special cases—such as rhubarb, asparagus, etc., which especially attack the can.

Lacquered cans are required for beets to prevent discoloration, and are especially desirable for such products as raspberries, cherries, plums, etc. For other products they are not at all necessary, for instance, corn, peas and tomatoes. It is a mistake to suppose that the lacquered can always adds to the quality and safety of the product.

Some there be who maintain that canned goods are even better than fresh. We can't go this far. Fresh foods are always superior to those that have been held, and the vitamin theory should lead us to see that fresh raw foods are not crowded from the diet. To eat the foods in season is the part of wisdom both dietetically and economically. But often fresh fruits and vegetables are not available, and always in the winter the supply is limited. In these conditions and to obtain variety—and as a policy of "preparedness"—a well stocked pantry of canned goods of all sorts, home-made or commercial, is a veritable godsend.

Illness from Canned Goods.

The tales of illness from canned goods are greatly exaggerated, and most often conclusions are jumped at in assigning causes. Only fish, meat and milk could spoil in any dangerous sense, developing ptomaines, etc.; vegetables and fruit nearly always give evidence of spoilage to the sense of smell and taste, and it is very doubtful if ptomaines are ever formed in them. Spoilage is usually due to under-processing or a leak in the container, and any canned food which shows discoloration, foreign odor or taste or a swelling of the can should be thrown away without debate.

Despite some difference of opinion on the subject, we still think that canned goods after opening should be emptied into a glass or earthen container, covered, kept in the ice box and used as soon as possible. Even perfect processing cannot prevent subsequent deterioration after the air is admitted. Canned goods are not perfect any more than fresh foods—the original material may be infected—but they present no special dangers and are about 95 per cent an unqualified blessing.

Canning Fresh and Perfect Fruit Just Picked from the Trees of One's Own Orchard, and Doing the Work Outdoors, Is the Ideal Way to Provide for Next Winter's Needs.

Some Facts About Canning Established by Many Experiments

One of the greatest flaws in canned goods is their labelling as to quality and manufacturer. The fancy names placed on the label mean little or nothing; and too often only the name of the jobber is given; cans are put up here and there and shipped out "blank," to receive the label, protestations and name of the man who sells them.

Fancy brand names carry no meaning, and one cannot distinguish at all between the different grades and qualities, "special extras," "fancy extra standard" on peaches, and June peas, "extra fine," "extra sifted," are all jargon to the buyer and not much better to the seller. A plain statement of the weight of the syrup and number of pieces of peach to the can would enable a woman to buy what she wanted at a given price.

The label should permit an intelligent choice. It would seem a very obvious proposition that the label should always bear the name of the manufacturer, the jobber for whom packed, if desired, and a plain statement of the quality and nature of the product.

While the canning industry is well aware of the objectionable features of the present practices, it has so far been impossible to secure a general reform of these deep-rooted customs. The label is required to give the true place of manufacture, if one is stated; to give the weight of the contents; to describe compounds in the case of jams (glucose, cheaper fruits mixed with more expensive ones, etc.); to declare artificial colors or permitted preservatives (this applies only to preserves; they are never found in canned goods), and if soaked dried beans or peas are used it must be so stated, and no deceptive pictures can be used.

No attempt has been made in this brief survey of some of the special points of interest in regard to canned goods and their importance in the food supply to give specific directions for canning. The desire is more to arouse interest and to point out the special considerations of importance to the home maker. The bulletins and books mentioned will supply the necessary details for home canning, if any one's ambitions in this direction are aroused—and no real housekeeper can see another's "preserve closet" without desiring "one like it."

Our Tested and Endorsed Recipes

THESE recipes were sent in by housewives who are taking a real and personal interest in what The Tribune Institute is trying to do for better housekeeping, and are willing to share their own experiences with other women. Each recipe as it comes in is submitted to the culinary expert of The Tribune Institute. She tests it by actually making the dish, and her report determines the acceptance or rejection of the recipe. If accepted, it is printed and $1 is paid to the contributor.

Potato Soup.

3 potatoes.
1 pint of milk or milk and cream.
1 onion.
2 tablespoonfuls of butter.
1 tablespoonful of flour.
Salt, white pepper, parsley and celery seed.

Boil the potatoes until soft. Brown the cut-up onion in the butter and have the milk hot. Mash the potatoes while hot, and beat thoroughly into them the flour, the butter and onion, the salt and pepper. It should be beaten until creamy. Stir the whole gradually into the hot milk and let it cook to thicken properly. Then serve at once. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and a little celery seed before serving.—Mrs. F. C. W., Washington.

Cheese Fondu.

1 cup scalded milk.
1 cup of soft bread crumbs.
1 tablespoonful butter.
½ teaspoonful salt.
¼ pound mild cheese cut fine.
Yolks and whites of three eggs.

Mix first five ingredients. Add well beaten yolks and fold in the stiffly beaten whites; pour into buttered baking dish. Bake twenty minutes in a moderate oven.—Miss M. L. P., New York.

Fresh Strawberry Omelette.

Hull and carefully wash one pint of strawberries. Place in a bowl with three tablespoonfuls of granulated sugar and two tablespoonfuls of water and let stand for fifteen minutes. Break eight eggs into a dish, add one-fourth cup of milk, a pinch of salt, two tablespoonfuls of sugar and beat very light. Heat a tablespoonful of butter in a frying pan, drop in the eggs, let them set and then place one-third of the berries across the centre. Fold the omelette over, let it set one minute more, turn it in a hot dish, arrange the rest of the berries about it and serve immediately. Such sweet omelettes can be used for a quick dessert on a busy morning, and with the aid of a small electric stove they can be made on the table while the meal is in progress.—Miss J. H., New York.

A French Recipe for Leek Soup.

To ten large potatoes use two bunches of leek. Peel, wash and cut into slices the potatoes and place in a saucepan. Clean and cut the leek into small pieces, and add to the potatoes with two quarts of water, salt and pepper. Boil until tender. Add one glass of milk; let boil. After removing from fire, add a tablespoonful of butter.—Miss S. E. S., New York.

Rye Gems.

1 cupful graham flour.
1 cupful rye flour.
1 dessertspoonful sugar.
Salt.
1 cupful sour milk.
1 teaspoonful soda in milk.
1 egg.
1 dessertspoonful melted butter.

Bake in well greased iron gem pans very hot, starting them on top of the stove until they rise. Finish baking in a quick oven.—Miss R. A., Maine.

Oven-Boiled Ham.

If you have no fireless cooker, try the following method of cooking a ham: Place the ham, whole or half, in a vessel large enough to hold it. Cover with hot or cold water, put in oven, and allow four hours after the water boils for a ham of ten pounds. It is a way of cooking ham, tongue or corned beef far superior to boiling on top of the range and makes the meat tender and delicate. Also, you have no steam or odor in your room.—Mrs. H. H. B., New York.

Tested Aids for the Household

The Tribune Institute experts have tested every article described on this page and know them to equal the claims of the manufacturer. The only unknown element is that of time, for it is obviously impossible to give any article the same wear and tear it would receive during weeks or months of actual usage. The material and construction of each article are considered, and it is believed that each article will give service that is fully satisfactory, although the actual length of wear cannot be guaranteed definitely. Should any of our readers find that an article has broken down under ordinary conditions before it has given reasonable service the facts should be reported fully to this Institute. Both the manufacturers and this Institute endeavor to present to our readers only those articles that have real merit and are of proper construction so as to give satisfactory service.

Mudge Patent Canner.
Made by the Biddle-Gaumer Company, 3846 and 3856 Lancaster Avenue, Philadelphia.

IT SOUNDS like a glorious dream to talk of canning or preserving fruits or vegetables without any necessity for the housewife to be cooked along with the fruit over a hot stove and made to hate life by the pile of pots and pans that must be cleaned and scoured afterward.

That is why the Mudge Patent Canner is something to save up for; in fact, to buy whether one can afford it or not. Only a housewife who has canned much fruit and hated it worse each year can appreciate what a labor-saving device this is. Its name is not pretty, but its actions are handsome enough to redeem anything.

The canner comes in several sizes, having one, two, three or four cylinders. Each cylinder holds one jar of whatever is to be canned,—or cooked, for soup may be cooked, milk sterilized and many other things besides canning may be done in this canner.

There are two styles—one with a square base and the other circular. This base is a heavy metal box about three inches deep, with round openings in the top through which the steam can rise around the cans when the base is half filled with boiling water. These openings are covered with perforated tin covers, upon which the open jar containing the raw fruit is placed and covered with the heavy metal cylinder. The steam rising from below is forced into the jar, not cooking but sterilizing the fruit by destroying bacteria and preventing fermentation. It is no more trouble to do up several jars of fruit than it is to heat a kettle of water. There is no danger of burned fingers, as an adjustable jar holder that will fit any size and kind of jar is furnished with each canner. This jar holder is leather lined, strongly bound with tin and has wooden handles. It is very handy not only to lift the hot jars but for sealing and also removing caps.

This canner is made in three models. The most expensive is constructed of copper throughout, tinned on the inside to prevent verdigris. This comes in the one, two and four cylinder sizes. The second model, which is less expensive, is made of tin plate with copper bottoms and tops, tinned inside, and also comes in the one, two and four cylinder sizes. The third and cheapest model is made of tin plate with copper tops, tinned on the inside, and includes the one, three and four cylinder sizes. The first two models are constructed with rectangular bases and can be arranged for any number of cylinders. Each is provided with a steam whistle which automatically blows off when the water is heated, a device that prevents the box from running dry and burning. Prices $3 to $16, depending upon the size and model selected.

Rollman Peach Stoner.
Made by Rollman Manufacturing Company, Mount Joy, Penn.

Pitting peaches usually implies need of a mackintosh first and a bathtub to follow. Also the fruit must be halved before the pit can be wrenched out. When "clings" are to be canned pitting by hand is about an all-day job.

But the Rollman Peach Stoner makes pitting of unpeeled peaches a safe game for an apronless child. It works so easily that a very slight push is all that is needed to operate the "plunger" and the fruit is left whole and unbruised, with the skin intact. The pit comes out clean and hardly a drop of juice is wasted.

The device is constructed entirely of metal, tinned, and can be operated by one hand. All there is of it is a supporting frame for the peach and a blunt and vertical rod with a spiral spring. When the rod is pushed down the stone is forced cleanly out of the fruit. When quantities of peaches are to be stoned the device can be fastened to a table top or shelf. Price 35 cents.

New Standard Lard and Fruit Press.
Made by the New Standard Hardware Works, Mount Joy, Penn.

This press possesses but few parts and is provided with a table clamp that opens one and one-half inches and fastens it securely. It is so designed that the base is on an angle for quick drainage and the perforated cup has a bottom so that the contents cannot be scattered. The pressure bar by means of a latch device can be split at the centre and attached or detached at any point of the screw shaft, thereby permitting a saving in time when pressing and refilling. All parts of the New Standard Fruit and Lard Press are metal, tinned and through their accessibility are readily kept sanitary. Its operation is simple and in tests made in the Institute berries were quickly and successfully pressed. When they are put into a small cotton bag and then placed in the press the juice is as clear as when dripped through a jelly bag. Extra attachments are provided for using this device to stuff sausages.

Enterprise Fruit, Wine and Jelly Press No. 34.
Made by Enterprise Manufacturing Company, Philadelphia and New York.

This device extracts the juice and ejects the skin and seeds in one operation. It clamps to the table and has a scroll or feed screw and crank handle similar to the ordinary food chopper. The tapering cylinder is open along the bottom and a strainer strip is placed over it, straining the juices as the pulp or refuse is projected out from the end. The principle of the Enterprise Fruit, Wine and Jelly Press No. 34 is simple and it is easily operated. It saves rehandling of the fruit, except when making jelly from berries. In such cases the juice is cloudy and must be strained through a cloth to clarify. The machine readily comes apart for cleaning and strainers of various fineness can be used. A thumb screw at the outlet regulates the dryness of the pulp. This press is of greatest value when all three of its operations are utilized at one time. Price $3.50.

New Standard Cherry Stoner No. 60.
Made by the New Standard Hardware Works, Mount Joy, Penn.

This cherry stoner is a plunger type machine, but is operated by crank mechanism. It can be rigidly fastened to the table (clamp opens one and one-fourth inches) and by turning the crank the plunger with the seeding knife moves up and down. On the down stroke the stone is forced out into a dish or pan placed beneath and on the return stroke the pitted cherry is thrown from the knife into another receptacle. In fact, it is a neat little cherry guillotine. The New Standard Cherry Stoner No. 60 is constructed of durable material, works rapidly, will take care of large or small cherries and seed them without mutilation or loss of juice.

Rollman Cherry Seeder No. 8.
Made by the Rollman Manufacturing Company, Mount Joy, Penn.

The Rollman Cherry Seeder No. 8 is of the punch or plunger type, attachable to any table edge or ledge ¼ inch to 1½ inches thick. It will remove the pit from large, small and medium cherries without crushing or any loss of juice. The cherries are placed into position by the left hand while the right hand pushes down the plunger knife. Thus the seed is driven out into one dish while the cherry is thrown into another. This device is as fascinating as a plaything, as it can be worked rapidly and easily and is adaptable for either canned or fresh cherries. Price $1.00.

Rollman Cherry Seeder No. 3.
Made by the Rollman Manufacturing Company, Mount Joy, Penn.

This cherry seeder is operated by a crank handle attached to the feeding wheel and is provided with a clamping device for fastening to table or ledge not over one and one-quarter inch thick. The feeding wheel has spirals which, in combination with the jaws, separate the pit from the pulp. The jaws are adjustable to various size cherries and the seeding can be done rapidly, but the cherry is somewhat crushed and a portion of the juice extracted. The device would be most useful where the fruit is to be preserved or made into jam. The Rollman Cherry Seeder No. 3 is made entirely of metal, tinned finish and is suitable for preparing the cherries for jam and preserves. Price 75 cents.

Atlas E. Z. Seal Fruit Jars.
Made by the Hazel-Atlas Glass Company, Wheeling, W. Va.

When purchasing glass preserving jars it always pays to get a good quality of glass and one that will stand the heat. With the cheaper and poorer grades, the greatest source of loss is through cracking when sterilizing or when filling with fruits, vegetables, etc.

The Atlas E. Z. Seal Fruit Jars are made of a good quality of glass free from "blowholes" and provided with a smooth edge wide mouth (two and one-fourth inches in diameter) so that the inside can be readily cleaned. They have glass tops, equipped with specially designed rubber rings and fastened on by wire clasps. These jars are made in half-pint, pint, quart and half-gallon sizes.

White Crown Mason Jar Cap.
Made by the White Crown Fruit Jar Company, Louisville, Ky.

Zinc caps should not be used on preserving jars, as the acids of the fruit corrode the inside and form compounds which are poisonous and disease breeding. The White Crown Cap is simple in construction, is easily kept sanitary and does not permit the contents of the jar to come into contact with any metal. It consists of an opal glass top with a tight-fitted rubber ring bordering the edge and a metal band that screws on to the jar. This cap when properly applied makes a perfect seal and prevents the entrance of air. It is simple to open jars having these caps, and since no deterioration takes place the caps can be used year after year. Price 35 cents per dozen.

"Good Luck" Jar Rings.
Made by the Boston Woven Hose Company, Boston, Mass.

At last we have a ring that will fit more than one kind of fruit jar. The "Good Luck" jar rings are made of a high grade of red rubber and can be used equally as well on Mason jars as on the Lightning type. The rubber is heavy, strong and elastic and made twelve rings to the inch. Price 10 cents per box of one dozen.

The Wizard Fruit Jar Wrench.
Made by the Ideal Sanitary Manufacturing Company, New Carlisle, Ind.

An easily adjusted wrench for tightening or loosening the caps of Mason fruit jars is the Wizard. It is made of steel, grips the cap without slipping and makes it possible to exert the proper leverage. It is a large improvement on turning the jar upside down in a pan of hot water to loosen, and then calling a man to do the twisting. Price 10 cents.

Perfection Jar Opener.
Made by the Perfection Jar Opener Company, 13 India Street, Boston.

Every housewife knows the last-minute bother of trying to open "that jar of fruit for dessert"; therefore, she will find this simple little device a veritable boon. It is called the Perfection Jar-Opener and is a handy tool, durably constructed of stamped steel. It is designed for opening any standard make glass-top jar. It is safe, sure, saves time, and requires no effort to use. Price 15 cents.

CANNING COMMANDMENTS

1. **Fresh fruits and vegetables are first choice if available; if not, canned goods, home-made or commercial, are a veritable godsend—wholesome, convenient and economical.**
2. **Canning means sterilization (killing bacteria and spores by heat, and hermetically sealing so that no invaders can enter the can). Nobody needs a canning powder—they are always dangerous and useless.**
3. **There is little if any more danger of illness from canned goods than from fresh. Sterilization is a highly perfected process, and nearly all spoilage makes itself known to sight and taste and smell. The most care must be exercised with milk and meat and fish.**
4. **Throw away a can that is "swelled" or leaky—this may mean insufficient sterilization or gas formation, and no chances should be taken, though sometimes it means only overfilling.**
5. **Use a thermometer—don't guess. Womanly intuition and the rule of thumb would never produce efficiency in a cannery, and they won't do it in the home kitchen.**
6. **Sulphites and saccharin in canned corn, copper sulphate for greening peas, boracic and salicylic acid for easier and surer preserving are all evils of a dead and buried past. The only canned goods chemically preserved to be found nowadays are those put up on the farms and small towns, where the peddler of the "preserving powders" misleads the unsuspecting home canner into using his anonymous wares.**
7. **A can of corn twenty-seven years old recently was critically examined by a food commissioner and pronounced to be "good eating." A product that was inferior before going into the can may at one year of age be a poorer product than its elder brother. However, age is not to be desired in canned foods, and they should not be carried over several seasons. The amount of tin dissolved increases on standing, condensed milks "lump," and excesses of heat or cold injure quality.**

ASK UNCLE SAM FOR IT

Uncle Sam not only stands ready to aid the housewife by placing at her disposal the results of experiments made by scientists in the employ of the Department of Agriculture—he actually begs her to make use of this rich store of material. It will help her to solve many a problem.

All of these bulletins may be had for the asking of the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, except Bulletin No. 196, which may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, for 10 cents. Send coin, not stamps.

"Methods Followed in the Commercial Canning of Foods," by A. W. Bitting, Bulletin No. 196. (While this bulletin is based on commercial practice, it will give the housekeeper a thorough scientific background for her home work, making it both more intelligent and more efficient.)

"Canning Vegetables in the Home," by J. F. Breazeale (Farmers' Bulletin No. 359.) (A simple, complete and practical treatise for the housewife.)

"Canning Tomatoes at Home and in Club Work," by J. F. Breazeale and O. H. Benson (Farmers' Bulletin No. 521). An extremely valuable bulletin for the housewife, both for the detail as to canning processes and the recipes included.)

"Canned Fruit, Preserves and Jellies, Household Methods of Preparation," by Maria Parloa. (Farmers' Bulletin No. 203. A bulletin compiled in 1904, but still of value both for its recipes and methods.)

The following bulletins from the Canning Club Series, New York State Department of Agriculture, are issued in the Cornell Reading Courses. Application should be made to A. R. Mann, editor, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.:

"Canning Club Series—Part II—Principles and Methods of Canning," by Flora Rose and O. H. Benson.

"Canning Club Series—Part III—Canning Equipment," by O. H. Benson and Flora Rose.

A very interesting, compact book, entitled "Canning and How to Use Canned Foods," has recently been issued by A. W. Bitting and K. C. Bitting, formerly of the Bureau of Chemistry, and now of the Research Laboratories of the National Canners' Association. Address National Capital Press, Inc., Washington. Price, 25 cents.